WHY IS THE NEWS SO INCREDIBLY LATE? READ *TALES FROM THE COMPUTER CRYPT*, PG. 8

MONTEREY NEWS

October 1998
VOLUME XXVIII · Number 10

THE TOWN

Interim School Budget Agreement. A task force composed of representatives of the five towns of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District agreed on September 18 to per-pupil assessment as the means for determining each town's share of the district's operating budget. This is an interim agreement proposed by the Alford delegation, and effective for three years, starting with Fiscal Year 1999. Since the state Education Reform Act was passed in 1993, assessment has been based on a complex formula, the cause of a long and often bitter fight among the towns. Under the terms of per-pupil assessment, Sheffield's share of the operating budget for this year would have been greater by $104,716 (more than 50% of school age population currently resides in Sheffield); Alford would have increased by $38,984; Egremont would have come out even; and Monterey's assessment would have decreased by $9,000. New Marlborough officials have claimed overassessment under the state formula, and withheld funds in the past; the town's delegation to the task force approved the per-pupil interim proposal. Capital budget assessment among the towns is based on property valuation, and is not at issue.

© DEBORAH MIELKE

Eager helpers pitch in at the Bidwell House potato harvest. From left to right, they are Dinah Mielke, Jenny Marcel, Emily Shaw, and Devon Gregor.

During the three-year period of the interim agreement, the five towns will attempt to work out an equitable method of assessment to replace permanently the simple per-pupil method of the interim. It is hoped that the burden on towns with high school age population can somehow be eased. If no permanent solution is found in the interim, the method of assessment will revert to what has been in place since 1993. This provision is seen as an incentive to finding a solution, given the strife of recent years over that method of assessment.

During the month of October voters in the five towns will cast their ballots at special town meetings for or against interim per-pupil assessment. The Monterey meeting is set for Wednesday, October 28, at 7 p.m. in the firehouse.

Bob Curtis Doing Well. Our man at the Monterey Solid Waste Transfer Station, garbologist Bob Curtis, is ill with a circulatory problem, but treatment is expected to bring speedy recovery, and a return to work. Well wishers may send greetings to Bob at Box 141, South Egremont 01258. On September 14, the Select Board discussed raising his wage from its current level of $8 per hour.

Improvements to the transfer station will likely get under way next April.

Police Grant Pending. Monterey Police Chief Gareth Backhaus expects approval of his grant application for $16,000 from the Department of Public Safety. The funds are to be used for community policing. Backhaus would purchase computer software, to reduce paperwork and provide a crime database to help in the investigation and reporting of criminal activity. A laptop computer will be used while sitting in the cruiser on patrol for speeders, thereby increasing workday efficiency. He should hear about the grant in October.

On the subject of grants, response to Monterey's application for federal funds under the Americans with Disabilities Act, for improvements to Town Hall, is expected November 2. Word on a grant from the U. S. Department of Agriculture (for the same purpose) is expected in December.

Pole Placement Approved. Ray Almori, representing Massachusetts Electric Company, came before the Select Board regarding the placement of five utility poles on Hupi Road. The Board was satisfied that the poles as located would not unduly interfere with the roadway or the trees that shade it.

— Jane Black

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The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ, Monterey, MA 01245.

CULTURAL COUNCIL GRANTS

October 15 is the deadline for grant applications to the Monterey Cultural Council. The Council is appointed by the Select Board to administer state grant money for the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences. Projects must benefit the community and be accessible to all; if a project is continual, it must have outside support. Individuals and organizations alike are encouraged to apply. Applications are available at the Town Hall, and completed forms should be mailed to Christine Goldfinger, Chair, Monterey Cultural Council, Monterey, MA 01245.

— Julie Shapiro

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HEALTH SCREENINGS

Flu and pneumonia vaccines will be administered on Tuesday, October 20, from 9-11 a.m., in the basement of the Town Offices by the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association.

A few reminders. Influenza is a serious disease. It causes thousands of deaths each year, mostly among the elderly. Who should get flu shots? Everyone sixty five years of age or older and anyone who wants to reduce their chance of catching the flu. The best time to get a flu shot is between September and December. A new shot is needed each year. For the pneumonia vaccine, most people need only one dose which can safely be given at the same time as the flu vaccine. Seniors are asked to bring their Medicare card.

The monthly blood pressure clinic will be canceled for October.

Senior Luncheon. A Senior luncheon will be held on Friday, October 23 at noon in the basement of the Town Offices.

— Pauline Nault

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NEW MARLBOROUGH CENTRAL MONTEREY SCHOOL NEWS

The 1998-99 school year began on September 1. Although classes have only been underway a few weeks, much has already taken place.

Mrs. Pottle's third/fourth grade traveled to Undermountain Elementary School to participate in a presentation by Montana Morris, a motivational speaker who performed on the rings and told about her life in the circus.

On September 16, Mrs. Pottle's class and Dan Weston's second/third/fourth grade class spent the day at the Bidwell House. According to Anita Carroll-Weldon sponsorship was provided by Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom and the Xeric Foundation. The latter was formed by the creators of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. After an introduction by Anita, the children took turns touring the house with Barbara Tryon, the garden with Ann Hanchett and the grounds with Tom Weldon. The Bidwell House and New Marlborough Central School (NMC) have collaborate before, when NMC received heirloom tomato plants from the Bidwell garden to plant in the school garden.

They garden with gusto at NMC. As a result of this year's harvest, the first PTA meeting of the year will be a "Stone Soup Supper" and will feature vegetables grown from the school garden. A book fair and classroom tours will also take place that evening.

The PTA's fall fund-raiser, the sale of gift wrap and related items, is underway.

— Deborah Mielke

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The Eagle's Brian Ketchen is in control. Ketchen and teammate Eddie Pickard move the play down the field in this soccer match between Mount Everett and the Lee Wildcats.

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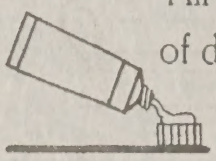

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LAKE GARFIELD ASSOCIATION

The Lake Garfield Association has submitted a recommendation to the Conservation Commission for a partial drawdown of the lake this year, and for continuing the cycle of partial, and full drawdowns for the next three years. It is hoped that the drawdown will help control the ubiquitous Milfoil weeds that are proliferating in the lake.

The Select Board has announced that a flood-control drawdown of Lake Garfield will commence on October 1, and will be complete by October 15, unless terminated earlier by the Department of Environmental Protection. The depth of the drawdown will be three feet. Refilling will take place on or about February 15, 1999, barring late-spring flood danger.

During a second-home owners meeting the Lake Garfield Association decided to form liaison committee with the Select Board. The goals of the committee are to establish a closer relationship with the town, and to explore the possibilities of improved lake access for townspeople.

A reminder for the first meeting of 1999. Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 26, at 10 a.m. Come and hear about our long term "Middfoil" milfoil weevil project, a biological means of controlling the weed.

— Patricia Edelstein

MONTEREY LAND TRUST

Much has happened since our last communication. At the annual meeting two new board members were elected: Sandy Banks and Katherine Roberts. At the August 10 meeting another two new board members were elected: Suzanne Hoppenstedt and Jon Sylbert. Welcome all! The following officers were also elected: Joyce Scheffey, President; Andi Dunlop, Treasurer; Katherine Roberts, Clerk. Mary Brock will be asked to act as Vice President.

Now that phase one of the Mount Hunger Preserve has been finished, we have a year to complete phase two and phase three, two other trails longer than the phase one trail. These will require a great deal of work to complete and we're hoping for lots of volunteers to help get them done in time. We are also moving forward on receiving a new property near Beartown State Forest, and with clean-up work (from the tornado) on a newly acquired sixty-plus acre property on Sandisfield Road.

At the August 17 meeting, there was a lengthy discussion of trail management at the Mount Hunger Preserve. Peter Jensen of OpenSpace Management offered us a great deal of information on the impact of various hiking and multiple-use trails, and it was clear from his comments that much care and forethought will be required in trail management. We've also formed a committee to work out the signs for the Mount Hunger property, and in its first meeting it was decided that the sign at the main entrance should be similar to the one created for Diane's Trail at Gould Farm. Please note: for safety the property will be closed during the shotgun season, November 30 through December 12. Hunting is by permission only. Finally, we discussed shortening the name of "The Monterey Preservation Land Trust" to just "The Monterey Land Trust." We don't want our signs to be any larger than they have to!

— Jon Sylbert

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CHRISTIE'S GREAT ESTATES

THE BIDWELL HOUSE

Autumn is always a busy season in the Berkshires. Fall foliage inspires everyone to get outdoors and enjoy the beautiful weather before the cold winter sets in.

This October the Bidwell House has several outdoor events. On Saturday, October 3 the museum is hosting the Annual Royal Hemlock Road Hike led by Gould Farm Naturalist Bob Rausch. The hike takes you down the eighteenth-century road that once connected the settlement of Hop Brook with the meeting house located just to the south of the Bidwell House. Today the road ends at the Shaker pond and dam in Tyringham. The hike begins at noon at the museum and it takes about four hours round trip. We recommend that you wear appropriate clothing for hiking in the woods, and that you bring a lunch or a snack to eat during the rest break at the pond. Please keep in mind this hike is down hill going and up hill returning. The hike is free.

Later on the evening of October 3, at 9 pm to be exact, there will be a Full Moon Owl Prowl at the museum. Led by Naturalist Tom Weldon, participants will learn the natural history of owls, visit their habitats and learn their calls. If we are lucky that evening the owls will answer back. Please bring a flashlight and wear appropriate clothing. The Owl Prowl is $3 for adults, $1 for children and free for museum members.

Please note that both the Owl Prowl and the Royal Hemlock Road Hike will be held weather permitting.

As part the Massachusetts Historical Commission's Archeology Week Program, The Bidwell House will hold a lecture and slide show following the progress of the Bidwell House dig that was conducted this past April. Archaeologist Joyce Clements will discuss the techniques and process of the dig and discuss the findings. Artifacts found during the dig will be on display. Admission is $3 for adults, $1 for children, and free for museum members. This event will be held at the Monterey United Church of Christ in the center of Monterey, on Saturday evening, October 10 beginning at 7:30.

To end the month, an Heirloom Apple Tasting and informative hike on the Meeting House Trail will be held on Sunday, October 11, at 1p.m., at the Bidwell House. Admission is $3 for adults, $1 for children and free for museum members.

For information on these events please call 528-6888.

— Anita Carroll-Weldon

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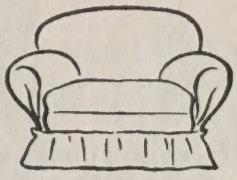

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GOULD FARM FORESTRY

On Tuesday, October 6 at 10 a.m. there will be a ceremony recognizing the completion of a six-acre timber stand improvement of young white-pine at Gould Farm. The stand is located less than half a mile south of Main House on Gould Road, towards Lowland Farm.

The work, which began in September of 1997, involved thinning and pruning. A cost-share program administered by the State of Massachusetts provided the initial incentive for the work to be done, creating a healthy, park-like forest.

Gould Farm's forests are managed under a Forest Stewardship Plan. The project was approved by our regional State Forester, Ed Fuller, who will attend the ceremony. Interested public are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served.

— Robert Rausch

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THE FAMILY NETWORK CHILDREN'S HEALTH, INC.

The Family Network is located at 940 South Main Street Great Barrington: call 528-0721 for more information. All events are held at the Family Center unless otherwise noted.

Some information about our programs. Children's Health Program, Inc. has four programs, including the Family Network, WIC (a nutrition program for women, infants, and children,) First Steps, and the Center For Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care (which is housed on the fourth floor of Fairview Hospital; the phone number is 528-8580). The Center serves five hundred children from birth to twenty one years of age each year. Using a health care team of nurse practitioners, a social Worker, and a nutritionist, families can be assisted with a variety of concerns which may affect a child's well-being. Routine physical exams, immunizations, health visits for children who are ill, vision and hearing screenings, nutrition, advocacy, and health guidance are some of the services offered. Special services are offered to young adults, including adolescent gynecological assistance with medical insurance is available for all Massachusetts clients.

A special thank you to St. James Church for sponsoring the Loaves and Fishes food program since 1981. This program will be absorbed by community services November 1. Both programs have served countless area families in times of need.

Some additions to our lending library: the video *Amazing Babies-Moving In The First Year*; and three new books, *The Fussy Baby* by William Sears, MD; *Games With Toddlers*, *Games With Babies*, and *More Games With Three Year Olds.*

Here is our calendar.

Drop in times at the Great Barrington Site: Mondays and Fridays noon-2p.m.; Tuesdays and Wednesdays 3-5 p.m.; and Thursdays 10 a.m.-noon. Due to staff scheduling,

changes have been made. For other times, please call to make an appointment.

Otis site, Town Hall, second floor: Thursdays 10 a.m.-noon.

Every Monday and Friday, Play and Learn Group for three and four year olds. Registration required. 10 a.m.-noon. Please call to preregister.

Every Tuesday, Mother-Baby Exercise Class 8:30 a.m. Pre-registration required. Childcare will be provided.

Every Tuesday, English as a Second Language (ESL) class 9:30 a.m. Childcare will be provided. Please call to register.

Every Wednesday, Parent-Child playgroup will be held at the Family Center in Great Barrington, 9:30 a.m.-11:30a.m.

Every Thursday, Parent-Child playgroup will be held at the Family Center in Great Barrington, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Some special events will also be planned on Thursdays.

October 1,8,15,22,29, Parent to Parent volunteer training, noon-2 p.m.

October 6, Licensed Day Care Providers meeting, theme and curriculum discussion, 7 p.m.

October 7,14,21,28, Conversational Spanish lessons, 1-2 p.m. Bring a bag lunch. Call to register.

October 12, Family Center closed for the Columbus Day Holiday

October 13,20,27, November 3,10,17, Parenting sessions with Maggie Sadoway, 1-2:30 p.m. Call to register. Childcare will be available. Suggested donation is $10 per session. Scholarships are available.

October 14, Big Brother, Big Sister sibling preparation class led by Mary Jane Sackett, RN, 3:30 p.m. Please call to register.

October 14 and 21, Setting Limits led by Maggie Sadoway, 6:30-8 p.m. Call to register.

October 16, Field trip to Gould Farm. We will be apple picking and visiting with the animals—please wear boots. Meet at Red Barns at 10 a.m. Gould Farm is off Route 23 in Monterey.

October 19, Parent-Infant Drop In, Cheryl Luft, movement therapist, will discuss infant movement during first year. Come meet other parents and learn about infant movement, 1 p.m.

October 24, Fall Festival Crafts and Activities, 10 a.m. Call to register. We will attempt to offer some Saturday programs if there is enough interest.

October 27 and 28, CPR for infants and children, led by Marsha Harvey, RN, 6-9 p.m. Fee of $20 includes CPR and First Aid, November 11, 6-9 p.m. Call to register.

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The Andrus girls get the pick of the pumpkins. Front to back is René, twins Alison and Ashley, and Morgan. Heather and Jon keep an eye on the troops.

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BIG BROTHER IS BACK

Big Brother and The Holding Company will be performing at Mount Everett High School in Sheffield, on October 11, at 6 p.m., in a concert to benefit the Eagle Fund. They will be joined by local groups Wishful Thinking, Traction, Flipper Dave, and Tom Ingersoll in what promises to be one of the most exciting concerts ever staged in South County.

Playing their original style of "progressive-regressive hurricane blue style," original Big Brother band members Sam Andrews, Dave Getz, and Peter Albin will be joined by new members guitarist Tom Finch and singer Lisa Battle for an evening of old and new. On a note of local interest, Dave Getz is the brother of former Monterey resident Peggy Reeves.

Those who come to hear Big Brother will (re) discover something they already know, that Big Brother was always more than just Janis Joplin's backup group, in fact, they were one of the seminal bands of the sixties San Francisco sound. Their album *Cheap Thrills* was one of the greatest live albums ever recorded, occupying the number one spot on the Billboard charts for eight weeks.

All the musicians are donating their talent for free to benefit the Eagle Fund, a community-supported endowment funded through private philanthropic resources. The goal of the Eagle Fund is to develop a significant endowment fund that can generate private resources. These funds will be used to augment the public effort to ensure that the students of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) have access to the best educational programs available.

This concert is the first event in the Indian Summer Music Festival series, a performing arts series mounted by the SBRSD Friends of the Arts. Tickets for the benefit concert are $20, students are $12, please contact Bob Law in the Events Office at (413) 229-8252.

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TALES FROM THE COMPUTER CRYPT

Or, No My Dog Did Not Eat The News

Dear Readers, Poets, Advertisers, Contributors of all sorts:

Late last month, late at night, the Monterey News was all wrapped up and ready for the printer. Just one last contribution to load into the computer, one final piece of the monthly puzzle, and the editor could fall into bed, sleep the sleep of the just—after two weeks of phone calls, writing, editing, jockeying, and laying out. What went wrong? We may never know for sure, but it was one of those disasters that happens to all of us who rely upon computers, who benefit from their speed and efficiency. What the computer gives to us (and it is so much!) it can also take away (exactly the same large amount). In the twinkling of an eye two weeks' work was lost, the file corrupted by a late-breaking eleventh-hour contribution in some incompatible form.

What to do? We considered a bare-bones issue: just the Town News and the calendar, no ads, no photos, but still timely. We thought about skipping the whole thing and seeing if anyone noticed. We considered sending everyone a tear-stained postcard. In the end, Maggie took a deep breath and sat down to do it *all over again*. [Editors note: italics mine.] Pete rode up on a white horse, back in the saddle for some emergency work in the middle of the night, and I said some consoling things and volunteered to write the excuses.

That's it. We are all sorry this happened and can pretty much be sure this particular thing won't crop up again. We apologize especially to the people and organizations who had events listed in the early part of the calendar.

Thank you for bearing with us.

Sincerely,
Bonner J. McAllester, President
Board of Directors
The Monterey News, Inc.

DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH

A few weeks ago, in the book *Luke*, by Fred B. Craddock, I read this:

"A great deal of preaching, especially in American churches, has devoted an inordinate amount of time on the conditions addressed by the gospel rather than on the gospel itself. While it is true that a dark velvet background helps bring out the beauty of the diamond cast against it, one almost gets the impression that some preachers enjoy the dark background more than the diamond."

I have thought a lot about that statement. Current events bear out the central truth of the quotation, which describes much of what is said in churches, synagogues, and mosques on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. It is also a truth that describes, and drives, the public media.

People have always been fascinated by the darker side of human conduct. I don't think this preoccupation is greater today than yesterday. We simply have the means to engage and titillate more people than was possible before. Seated in pews and on sofas, we are becoming big time voyeurs, and with our focus on the dark background of each other's lives, we are losing the beauty of the diamond, the person.

The gospel of Jesus is confounding, vexing. Consider the parable of the Loving Father (popularly known as that of the Prodigal Son—showing how we identify with the message!), a story of love, forgiveness, and joy. The reader is left with a tension. A party is given for the younger son, who has been irresponsibly living it up. The reader expects and wants the father to give the party for the older son, who stayed at home and worked hard. But God's love seems to abrogate justice, and therein lies the tension. As Craddock writes in Luke: "There is a condition worse than death, to be lost; there is a condition better than life, to be found." By this parable Jesus relates that there is not only a prodigal son and a responsible son, but also a loving father.

All the hoopla surrounding the recent sex, lies, and videotape episode reveals how easy it is for us to be preoccupied with the dark background of others' lives. Neither truth nor justice is served in the present climate of self-righteous and legalistic obfuscation. All branches of government have succumbed to a parochialism that befogs, belittles, and betrays.

In the midst of this farce I am renewed by the story of the loving father who had two sons, loved two sons, and went out to two sons. Craddock writes:

"Perhaps it is because of the competitive rather than cooperative spirit of our society, but the common thought is that there must be losers if there are winners. Hence, even in religion, it is very difficult not to think of Jews or Gentiles, poor or rich, saint or sinner, older son or younger son. But God's love is both/and, not either/or. The embrace of the younger son did not mean the rejection of the older; the love of tax collectors and sinners does not at all negate love of Pharisees and scribes. Such is God's love, but we find it difficult not be offended by God's grace toward another, especially if we have serious questions about that person's conduct and character."

But that is the gospel! Acknowledging that each one of us is a child of God! Let us not become so preoccupied with the dark background that we lose sight of the diamond: God's unequivocal love for each one of us, including President Clinton, Monica Lewinsky, and Kenneth Starr.

— Keith Snow, Pastor
United Church of Christ

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SENATOR SAYS

Giants in the Wilderness. As part of the Centennial Anniversary Celebration of the state forests and parks system, the drama *Giants in the Wilderness* will be presented at locations throughout the state. Written by Genevieve Cora Fraser, the play showcases the nation's emerging environmental movement in a Colorado setting circa 1896. Following the presentation, there will be a discussion about public and private forestlands in the Commonwealth.

I have served on the legislature's Special Commission on Forest and Wood Products since early in my Senate term. It is a goal of this Commission to apply the best modern forestry practices to state-owned forests to promote the diversity and health of our woodlands, and to explore timber products as an economic development opportunity for rural communities in the Commonwealth. I hope that this play offers a chance for citizens to educate themselves and to offer input about their environmental priorities and about issues surrounding the future of forestlands of Massachusetts.

I am pleased that many special events during the DEM Centennial have taken place in western Massachusetts, giving local citizens a chance for renewed appreciation of the benefits DEM brings to our region. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the many DEM staff people who live in this district for their ongoing contributions to the land and people of the Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin District, and to congratulate them for the fine job they are doing in this Centennial year.

Giants in the Wilderness will be performed in western Massachusetts on Sunday, October 18, at 2 p.m., Western Gateway Heritage State Park, 9 Furnace Street, North Adams. Please call (413) 663-6312 for additional information

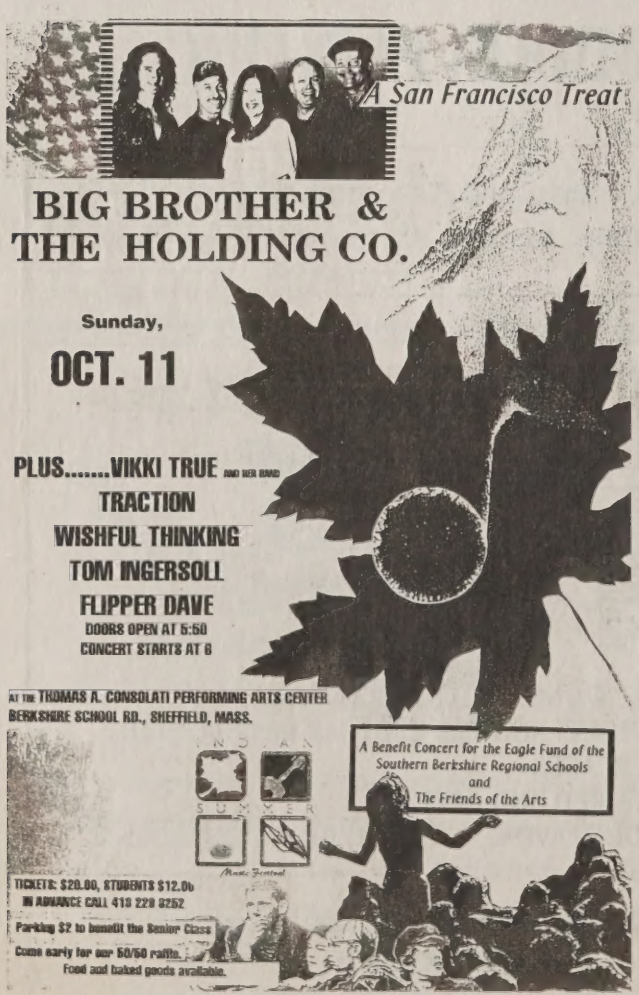
New Source Book for Elders. There is new assistance for seniors who require more services but need help knowing who to call. *The Source Book for Seniors*, published by the Massachusetts Senior Action Council (MSAC), offers one-stop shopping for elder services in the Commonwealth. The second edition of the 114 page *Source Book* was unveiled on August 18 at the State House. It contains information and government contacts that the elderly can use to get information about health care, insurance, nursing home care, income assistance programs, transportation, housing options, nutrition, abuse and legal resources.

State officials say more than 800,000 residents of Massachusetts are over sixty five. The first edition of *The Source Book* was published by MSAC in 1994 with cooperation from the Department of Public Health. The updated and expanded edition was edited and printed with help from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA).

To obtain copies of *The Source Book*, call MSAC at 617-350-6722 or the EOEA at 1-800-882-2003. The MSAC will make 6,500 copies of *The Source Book* available for free. It will take orders for additional copies, with discounted rates available for bulk purchases.

Historic Preservation Conference. I have been pleased to see many western Massachusetts landmarks benefit from the Preservation Projects grant program of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) over the past two years. The annual historic preservation conference of the MHC will take place on Friday, September 25 at Bunker Hill Community College in the Boston neighborhood of Charlestown. The registration fee of $25 includes a box lunch, and entrance to conference sessions ranging from Preservation Funding Programs to Community Archaeology to A Highway Planning Primer. Other workshops address topics such as the permitting process and how to foster relationships with the media. Many of the sessions are geared toward people who are new to the preservation field but want to understand basics. Daycare is available if arranged in advance. Contact Bill Steelman, conference planner for MHC at (617) 727-8470 ext. 361, or my district office at (413) 442-6810 for more information. Information is also available on the MHC web site www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc.

— Senator Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr.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WISHFUL THINKING
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REP RAP

The old adage "you get what you pay for" doesn't always ring true at the register.

Since I have been in office the number one consumer complaint that I have received is that individual items are not marked at grocery stores, and often the price on the shelf doesn't match the one on a customer's receipt. While there are unit pricing laws in Massachusetts that prohibit this, these laws have been a patchwork system at best. In response to these complaints, I conducted a sting on local grocery stores two years ago. I found thousands of items without individual stickers and that many prices, in fact, were scanned incorrectly at the register. These actions make it nearly impossible for the customer to double check the price of an item and recover any money lost during the transaction. As a result of this fact finding trip, I filed a bill with my colleagues called the Consumer and Merchant Protection Act that would ensure proper enforcement of the pricing codes. After a year of intense work on pushing the bill through the legislative process, it was signed by the Acting Governor this summer and marks the largest victory for consumers this year.

The bill has three major provisions that will empower everyone from customers to local store owners to weights and measures inspectors. Retail scanning systems located at stores with three or more checkout counters must be inspected every two years for accuracy. State and local inspectors will be given the authority to issue "parking ticket" type fines for violations of the state's weights and measures laws. The law also institutes certification and continuing education requirements for all inspectors, sealers and deputies. These measures will a go a long way in restoring consumer confidence in retail outlets while simultaneously improving business procedures.

The law is groundbreaking and has the potential to save Massachusetts consumers $90 million dollars annually. When you buy a pound of turkey, a gallon of gas or a cord of firewood you should get exactly what you pay for at the price advertised. Pricing accuracy helps to keep dollars in consumers' pockets and promotes fair and proper business practices.

The Consumer Merchant and Protection Law will provide the needed comprehensive reform of the current Weights and Measures regulations so that the law works for customers and business owners, alike.

Should you have any questions about this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact my full time district office in Lee, at 243-0289.

— Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins

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and large is a Mac truck."

-- *Matthew Breuer, a Roadside regular*

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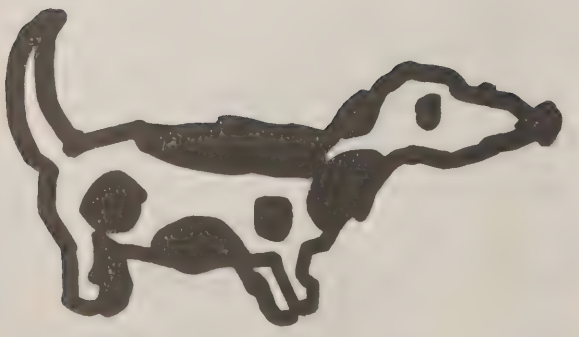
PYTHAGORAS

Pythagoras, of old
heard in his waking dream
the ancillary prographs of the Golden Word.
The petty petitions of the worm-eaters
as yet deferred
were as the dust unformed on my piano
wrapped in its plastic sheet
lest the music escape
and make this heart more wretched
to lose its unsung beat.

Space to him was iridescence
a scale of ordered rhapsodies
spiraling with half-furled wings
in the chromathematics
Eternal Being sings with such grave and sweet restraint.

When he had reached the tower of his reasoning
he found the steps back down
were black and white
triangles and ringed with fright.
What was the Greek for the coming "do, re, mi"? —
He must have cleaned his
trembling fingernails
to remind himself that he was mortal.



Pythagoras of old
saw in his waking dream
the universe - a cosmic harp
with stars for streaming notes
and space for non-existent things:
the precessions of the equinox
the cadence of planets holding hands
in their stately dance of epoch
which demands
converging rays of every circle
sun-centered in wonder —
His thought yet thunders down the centuries
as some wild exultant Pegasus
scattering bright hoofprints
in our wincing minds.

Let me tell you that
his eyes in death became light mirrors of fire
and in his visions and his desire
he was blinded and could not speak.
We yet see ourselves reflected
in the square of his hypotenuse
singing mutely "do, re, mi - "
though not, of course, in Greek.

— A.O. Howell

SEPTEMBER WILDFLOWERS

Constellation (Wedding Song)

a feather
of raven's wing
falls upon an old
goat skin drum
riffin'
tribal
among the stars
riffin'
constellate
in the home fire
riffin'
bright
shining peace

R.Zukowski

Wildflowers

twilight settles
mirrored in the ripple-less mind
of my swimming hole
amidst the rumblings
of this rocky skull
there's still a place called home
wildflowers blooming
from the darkest edges
effortlessly on

— R. Zukowski

Be Bop Beloved

hip hop, be bop
can't stop Bobby D
tell tale true tale
wag your tail on the trail
to Boston, lost on
crosstown telephones
rasta bones or ozone
make no bones, it's your own
divine will climbs the hill
your thrill is still
the silly thistle headed
chilly whistle threading
gristle and girls
bristling in bedding
the world is waiting
for a few like you
who knew how cool
the school of life
it's foolish strife
it's mulish knights
in armor fight
yet harbor light
in darkest nights
you're right
to set your sights
on love, beloved

— R. Zukowski

Wildlife Control Officer Dale Duryea holds a fox kit with gloved hands. Photo courtesy of Beth King.

WILDLIFE SURVEY

In general the countryside looks much as it did last month. Queen Anne's lace and goldenrod are everywhere, but wild clematis is taking the place of wild cucumber, not with its flowers but with the gleaming white plumes attached to each ball of seeds. These decorate the tops of bushy hedgerows and alders in moist places. A froth of white wood asters is still abundant in the mixed hardwoods and the gentians have changed their vivid blue to a duller purplish shade as they get ready to make seeds. The Berkshires are still very green but more fall color is evident: here and there a whole maple is starting to turn and there are pastel colors in the swamps. Sensitive fern and ostrich fern and sarsaparilla are turning yellow and gold.

The time of fruits. Fruits provide some of the brightest colors of early fall. Wild cherries and buckthorn fruits are gleaming black, haw apples and rose hips are red and orange, jack-in-the-pulpit berries form big scarlet clusters, panicled dogwood berries are a livid white, moosewood berries are bright orange, black alder berries are glowing red among the leaves which will soon drop, leaving the fruit for several months earning their name: "winter berry." White baneberries are abundant while the red ones have faded away. The former, waxy white with conspicuous black dots on the distal end, are appropriately called "dolls' eyes." Of course the grasses and sedges and trees are all in fruit, too and are quite evident enough to the wildlife that feeds on them.

Falling acorns are a special feature of early autumn. When they are dropped by squirrels or fall of their own accord they make a percussion obligato to the music of the woods. Often one of these hard little missles will hit several branches on the way down, rapping out jazzy sonorities and ending with a thump on the ground or a "plonk!" if they land in water. They may hit a car on our shady roads with amplified effects from such a large, hollow resonator.

Spiderwebs. Early autumn seems to be a time of extra production for the orb spiders. Elegant webs, some almost two feet across and with guy threads that may be six or eight feet long or more, are stretched across likely places. A swarming of insects that look like tiny dragonflies, a quarter-inch in length, took place on the night of September 12-13. In their myriad's they hovered outside two of our windows where there were lights inside, and three big spiderwebs caught several hundred, each. The effect was like lace dollies at first, but by next morning there was a clear space in the center of each circle and a day later there was only a tattered remnant of the periphery and the spider was rebuilding the center of the web. We never saw her eating these tiny insects.

Dale Duryea has seen coyotes and turkeys back in this area as of early September, after being elsewhere most of the summer. He got word of a bobcat in early August below the Heaths' near the Wilson property, and a bear at the end of August crossing Route 23 near Hupi Road, headed north. Josephine Courtenay saw a very dark raccoon chasing a much lighter one across the main Road just east of Monterey Center, September 1 about 8 a.m.; a few days earlier a half-grown raccoon was sitting up on its haunches by the waterfall below the McAllester pond making short whining noises, apparently puzzled by the sound of someone splashing in the pond. A red fox was crossing the Thorn driveway, off the Main Road, in late August.

Birdlife. Loons were spotted by David and Bonner McAllester on Lake Garfield, a half-grown one August 22 and two adults September 14, both sightings in the early morning; Kyle Pierce reported a loon on Lake Buel, September 10. Dale and Anna Duryea saw two cormorants in Parker's Cove in late August. Other reports: quite a few turkeys, goldfinches, great blue herons, cedar waxwings, grouse, catbirds, a flock of over one hundred Canada geese (not high, just practicing?), juncos, a flock of blackbirds at Barnum's Flats, September 8.

Flowers. Marsh skull cap, purple loose strife, gentians, blue lobelia, August 22; rattlesnake plantain, August 25; pearly everlasting, August 27; Indian pipe, wild thyme, Jerusalem artichoke, evening primrose, groundnut, Mexican smartweed, white and yellow waterlillies, jewelweed, September 1; water polygonum, potentilla, boneset, ground dogwood, one wild strawberry blossom, turtlehead, forget-me-not, Joe Pye weed, meadowsweet, marshmallow, September 10.

Insects. This seems to be the time that yellow jackets make their nests in rock walls, under logs, and underground. Watch out for these last, the entrance is inconspicuous and several dozen Home Guards will sally out to drive you off if you accidentally get too close.

— David P. McAllester

A WALK WITH BRIAN BORU

A couple of weeks ago, an old friend slipped me a newspaper clipping. "Tell me what you think of this," she said. "I"d like to do this with you and the girls—my treat."

When I got home and read the article I felt a flash of deja vu. About fifteen years ago, before we got the girls but after we'd had goats for a few years, I was scheming up ways to make a living in the Berkshires. Joe and I were on a camping trip in the Rockies, visiting the scenes of our young years when we were dude wranglers. We worked with horses and took people on pack trips.

Thinking about those days I suddenly had a vision of pack goats, or maybe draft goats. I pictured scaled-down pack saddles and harnesses, cleverly put together of blue nylon webbing and shiny buckles. This would be something we could do with the wethers, the conscience-pricking males of the dairy breeds. My fantasy took off as I pictured the appeal draft goats would have for the suburban wannabe homesteader. We could rig up a little snowplow for the sidewalk, maybe a goat-drawn lawn mower.

When we got home to the Berkshires I ran my idea by a few of my goat colleagues. There was serious doubt as to the degree of cooperative spirit I could expect from a goat, they pointed out. My mother had had a goat that pulled a wagon when she was a child, but the old photo showed the goat being led, or maybe dragged—not driven. I felt my draft-goat ardor cooling.

We did finally put a little pack saddle on one of our milkers and we loaded up canvas panniers with picnic and blanket, perched a child on top, and headed out into the woods for lunch. I thought about day-hikes with pack goats. Then I gave it up. People carry their own lunches on day hikes, I figured. They would never hire a goat and a guide.

Now, years later, I think I might have been wrong about this. Here in the newspaper clipping I read about two enterprising Berkshire women who are doing exactly what I'd pictured, but not with goats. They use llamas, those gentle aristocrats of the Andes with the long eyelashes and pillows on their feet.

My mother raised me to say "yama" when speaking of the animal and "lama" when referring to a Buddhist monk. Now that llama is such a household word around here, with at least four households right in Monterey harboring the creatures, I find I feel affected when I cling to Mom's Spanish "ll." These are American llamas, after all, and after my experience with Brian Boru, I think they may be more Buddhist than Spanish, anyway.

I made a few phone calls and we drove to meet the Moon Mountain Llama women at a rendezvous place. As we approached the modest Dodge Caravan by the side of the road, wondering where the trailer was, the side door opened and out stepped three long-necked, tassel-eared marvels. They were like a cross between some Dr. Seuss creature and a Vogue model. I couldn't decide whether these were court jesters, gypsy dancers, aesthetes, poets, or incarnations of Pan.

Laurie Moon introduced us to Wisteria Rose, Boo-ray, and Brian Boru. Boo-ray was the youngster, with that universal appeal of the young mammal, as well as all of his specific llamic charms. Wisteria Rose, a young female, kept Boo-ray grounded and matched him in looks, being essentially brown and woolly. It was tall Brian Boru who stole my heart.

He wore his black and white harlequin suit with the aplomb that reminds us the fool is so often the sage. Brian Boru is right out of Shakespeare and when I walk beside him we are eye-ball to eye-ball. His long neck brushes my shoulder as he lets me put my arm around him, and his ears curve forward with tufts on the tips.

Brian Boru wears thigh-length woolly chaps, like old-stlye buckaroos. From the knee down, his legs are slim with short, tidy, black and white pelage. With each step, the long wool over his knees flounces up so he reminds me of a marching drum majorette in a short, flared skirt.

Boru carries our snack, provided by the guides. He is wearing a stylish pack saddle and harness of red nylon webbing, much like the gear I'd imagined on my pack goats. I can just see him in the same gear catalogue with my goats, against a mountain back-drop, with happy trekkers (us) standing nearby.

Moon Mountain Llamas has a brochure and is booked up with fall foliage hikes all through October. They go to Mount Greylock and hike the Appalachian Trail, they give Yoga walks where you stop now and then to do stretches, and they visit nursing homes and brighten peoples' lives. One of their ideas is that llamas have healing powers. They also cause you to slow down, in case you are a driven, fitness hiker. Walking with Brian Boru, Wisteria Rose, and Boo-ray, you will definitely take time to stop and admire the daisies. Laurie and Tracy, who run Moon Mountain Llamas, have both experienced serious illnesses recently and they know their life with llamas has helped heal them. They will tell you about it if you ask, or they will just let you walk with your arm around the harlequin Pan, they way I did, and draw your own conclusions about the blessing of life with animals.

— Bonner McAllester

GOULD FARM GOOD-BYE

For eight years I have lived and worked at Gould Farm as a staff member. It is a good chunk of my life; the longest time I have lived in one place as an adult. And now it is time to move on.

I am moving to Boston, where I have lived before, this time to work for the Gould Farm programs in Boston. I know the people I will be working with. They are guests who have been at Gould Farm and have moved on to a more independent, less restrictive environment. The only difference is that now, instead of working in the gardens or the barn or the kitchen, they ride the train to their jobs or school. Seeing them file down from the commuter train gives me a start, as if something is out of place, like seeing penguins emerge from the jungle instead of an ice floe.

I know I've changed over the past eight years, but it is difficult to see it, because rural life gives the illusion of timelessness. The seasons change the landscape continuously, but the change of seasons has a repeated rhythm. Even the rocks and earth change, but so slowly that we feel they are always there, comforting and constant. It is one great discovery I have made about living in the country: the land has a life of its own, a presence more powerful than the things that inhabit it. I am instinctively in awe of this presence, sometimes thrilled by it, always comforted. I know the view from Topside Knoll at Gould Farm and Hunger Mountain and the sound of Rawson brook, and the feel of running down the hill at Sunset Rock. On top of this seemingly unchanging framework, grass and trees and roads and houses arise, live, and die. Even the tornado was only a blip in terms of earth-time.

Gould Farm has its own sense of timelessness. Three times a day the bell rings for meals. Teatime at four o'clock. Staff meeting on Tuesday. Morning meeting at 8:05. Work at 8:30. The coming and going of guests and staff has a rhythm, too, just like the rhythm of the Berkshire seasons, and after awhile that seems to repeat itself.

I have tried to imagine what an average Monterey person thinks of Gould Farm Is it a castle on the hill, filled with vaguely disturbing shadows? Who is up there? Retarded kids? Crazy people? Are they violent? Can they carry on a normal conversation? It is always fun when local people actually work at the Farm and realize that their images are all wrong. As staff and guests live together, labels and stereotypes drop away. Everyone has strengths. Everyone has weaknesses. Perhaps the difference at Gould Farm is the degree of suffering. Most guests are unhappy, have difficulty with life, and most are open about it. At the Farm they learn they have so much else to give, so many resources in themselves that they have forgotten. Perhaps they also discover that suffering is universal, and it is not the absence of suffering that is the goal but being able to handle it better. Staff learn the same lesson from a different perspective, and it is a rare staff person who doesn't become involved with, and learn from, guests, and leave with a greater appreciation of life.

Sometimes the suffering is hard to live with for everyone. But as difficult as it is, that is how much joy there is when a person manages to turn it around, to gain some hope and confidence and strength to move forward. It is a joy we all, staff and guests alike, feel and are proud to be part of. Corny as that sounds, it's true.

To live and work at the Farm is involving to a degree that is hard to explain if you haven't done something similar. I have no trouble getting motivated to come to work each day. I always want to know the answer to these questions: How will different guests do today? Will they get up for work? Will they practice piano? Will they feel a little better than yesterday? Each person has his or her own unique story and the answers to these questions are always mysteries, to be answered fresh each day. This is why I love the work.

As wonderful as it is to be involved it is also confining. Your perspectives can become warped. You can grow stale. What was petty at one time becomes significant. There are the usual questions of politics, power, communication, and direction, that affect every

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group from the large corporation to the food co-op. You become involved and it's hard to let go. Conversations revolve around the Farm, even when you're taking a walk in the beautiful woods. Eventually you realize you need to leave to free yourself.

The last few weeks have been overwhelming, and it is only in this last week that things have fallen into place. I can't really leave until I leave, although I have been phasing myself out of Gould Farm for some time now. I have finally begun the process of saying my good-byes, to the guests at the Farm, and to my friends and co-workers.

I am trying to say good-bye to my neighbors: residents of Monterey, whom I have gotten to know throughout the years and whose presence, like the landscape they inhabit, is constant and comforting. I have grown to appreciate the virtues of small-town neighborliness and regret that I have not been more involved with the community outside Gould Farm. Perhaps there will be more chances in the future.

Finally, I need to say good-bye to the land. In addition to everything else I have said, I think of what the land has given to me. I have loved cutting trees, putting up fences, stacking hay, and chasing cows. At different times during these eight years the land has been a backdrop to intense conversations, to romance, to solitary sadness, to silent companionship. I don't want to leave it. It is as much music to me as music.

Despite that, I look forward to my new life. But I know that what I have lived in these eight years has become an integral part of me. I think living here has been kind of like learning to ride a bicycle: once you've done it, you never forget how. What I've learned here will stay with me, and I won't forget how.

— Oren Rosenthal

SPAWNING AT THE AUTUMN EQUINOX

Now, when the Berkshire growing season is almost complete, some species of fish begin their spawning runs. Our native brook trout, as well as the larger brown trout (illustration above) spawn in autumn instead of spring as might be expected.

The anadromous spawning runs of Atlantic salmon, and the spring migrations of herring up the coastal rivers to the pools of their origin may be more spectacular, but the reproductive ritual of the trout is no less inevitable come the autumnal equinox. The male is first called up from the dark haunts of his summer lairs to his ancestral gravel bed, a gleaming pool in a secluded place where light filters through evergreens to dance upon the water. He is soon joined by the female, who hollows out a shallow nest (called a redd) with her tail, and by the same motion deposits her roe. Overhead the male agitates clouds of fertile seed that look like silt.

From this moment, through egg to embryo to fingerling, the fish that hatches the following spring has a life-long affinity for the waters of its conception, and the horoscope of autumnal equinox is imprinted in its eye.

— George Emmons

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PERSONAL NOTES

Happy Birthday on October 1 to **Rita Gottlieb** and **Karla Eileen Brady**, on October 2 to **Jim Gauthier** and **Mabel Sheridan**, on October 4 to **Giuliana Raab**, on October 6 to **Oriana Raab**, on October 9 to **Joseph Makuc** and **Tom Thorn**, on October 11 to **Karen Shreefter**, on October 12 to **Dave Quisenberry**, on October 17 to **Taylor Amstead** and **Jeri Palmer**, on October 19 to **Jill Amstead**, on October 22 to **Ian Rodgers**, on October 24 to **Claire Mielke**, on October 26 to **Elizabeth Orenstein** and **Debbie Mielke**, and on October 31 to **Gisela Freundlich**.

Happy **Fiftieth Anniversary** wishes this month, on October 5 to **Dick** and **Barbara Tryon**. Congratulations and may you have many more years of happiness.

My e-mail held a couple of messages for the Personal Notes this month. I'm glad to see the word is going out. Congratulations to **David** and **Lisa Quisenberry** on the birth of their son, **Ian David**, on August 11, and to **Catharyn**, **Jonathan**, and **Benjamin Fletcher** of Fairview Road on the arrival of **Peter Desmond Fletcher**, born August 20, at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

The end of summer also brought this note: On Friday, September 11, friends of **Gisela Freundlich** attended a surprise luncheon hosted by **Lola Erda** at the Swiss Hutte in South Egremont. Attending were Gisela Freundlich, Lola Erda, **Janet Garber**, **Garde Wolff**, **Elizabeth Wolff**, **Kathleen Gillis** and **Mickey Freundlich**. This luncheon was to celebrate a birthday in October for Gisela, and also was a farewell to summer.

We enjoy hearing your news, and passing on birthday and anniversary greetings. If you have any you would like to share, please drop me a line at P.O. Box 351, Monterey, MA 01245, or give me a call at 528-6691, if possible, before the twelfth of each month. If you prefer to use e-mail, my address is higgins@vgernet.net. Thank you so much.

— Ann Higgins

THE OBSERVER

August 25-September 25

High temp. (8/28)	84°
Low temp. (9/24)	33°
Wind chilled low temp. (9/23)	30.2°
Avg. high temp.	74.5°
Avg. low temp.	51.7°
Avg. temp.	63.1°
High bar. press. (9/24)	30.18"
Low bar. press.(9/8)	29.46"
High wind gust (9/8)	23 m.p.h.

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After almost 18 years of operation on Main Road in Monterey, we were finally forced to admit that we had outgrown our two locations here in town. So we've relocated to a 4800 sq. ft. facility (soon to be 7200 sq. ft. with a new state-of-the-art paint department) on Route 7, 1.5 miles south of the old fairgrounds. We'd like to invite all of our friends and customers to stop in and say hello, to take a look around our new shop. And as always, we offer free pickup and delivery, and lifetime collision repair and PPG paint guarantees. Thank you for your support.

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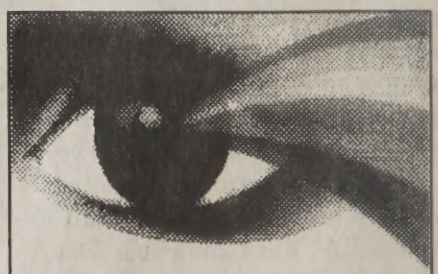

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CALENDAR

Thursday, October 1, Drawdown of Lake Garfield begins.

Saturday, October 3, Annual Royal Hemlock Hike begins at noon at the Bidwell House. Hike is led by naturalist Bob Rausch and is free. Bring a snack and dress appropriately for the weather. Call 413-528-6888 for more information.

Saturday, October 3, 9 p.m., Owl Prowl at the Bidwell House. Naturalist Tom Weldon will discuss the natural history of owls and visit their habitats. Admission is $3 for adults, $1 for children, and free for museum members. Call 413-528-6888 for more information.

Tuesday, October 6, 10 a.m., Ceremony to recognize the completion of timber stand improvement at Gould Farm, less than a half mile south of Main House on Gould Road towards Lowland Farm. Refreshments will be served.

Saturday, October 10, 7:30 p.m., Archeologist Joyce Clements will discuss the Bidwell House dig and discuss the findings. Artifacts uncovered from the dig will be on display. Admission is $3 for adults, $1 for children, and free for museum members. Call 413-528-6888 for more information.

Sunday, October 11, 6 p.m., Big Brother & The Holding Company in concert at Mount Everett High School. Plus: Vikki True, Traction, Wishful Thinking, Tom Ingersoll, and Flipper Dave. Tickets $20 for adults, students $12, all proceeds to benefit The Eagle Fund.

Monday, October 12, Columbus Day holiday, Town Offices closed, no meeting of Board of Health or Select Board.

Friday, October 16, Children's Health Program field trip to Gould Farm. Wear boots and meet at the red barns at 10 a.m. Gould Farm is off Route 23.

Tuesday, October 20, Flu and pneumonia clinic, 9-11 a.m., Town Offices. Seniors please bring your Medicare card.

Saturday, October 24, Square and contradancing 8:30-11:30 p.m., at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, MA. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances are taught and beginners and children are welcome. Refreshments served at intermission. Adults $5, children $2. For information call 413-528-9385 or 518-329-7578.

© JOHN HUMPHREY

An old-fashioned cider press was one of the attractions at the Annual Pumpkin Festival at Tall Pine Farm.

Wednesday, October 28, at 7 p.m., Special Town Meeting to vote on Southern Berkshire Regional School Board assessment solution, at the firehouse.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Scott Duhon pgs. 10 & 12, Katie Olds pg. 13, Bonner McAllester pg.15, George Emmons pg. 17.

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